

**DOWNTOWN PARKING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
January 26, 2005**

Present

Lita Verts  
Rob Gándara  
Andy Ross  
Joan Wessell  
John Howe  
Richard Mehlhaf  
Stan Nudelman

Staff

Joe Whinnery, Public Works  
Jim Mitchell, Public Works

Visitors

Barbara Ross  
Ann Rigor

Absent

Jeff Katz, Chair  
Mike Blair  
Jim Gibson  
Jean Bonifas

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations
I. Approval of December 1, 2004 Minutes			Approved, with corrections
II. Commission Reports	X		
III. Old Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Morning Bakery 30-minute parking space request</li> <li>6-Hour Parking Limit</li> </ul>		X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A motion passed to put a 30-minute space on east side of block housing New Morning Bakery</li> </ul>
IV. New Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter from Mardi Bilsland- \$10 Violation at 30-minute spaces</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forwarded to Police Dept. a recommendation for recurring tickets at 30-minute spaces</li> </ul>
V. Visitor Comments			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A copy of Ann Rigor's testimony will be sent to Police Dept.</li> </ul>
VI. Other Business/Actions/Information Sharing	X		

**CONTENT OF DISCUSSION**

## **I. Approve December 1, 2004 Minutes**

Lita Verts called the meeting to order.

The following are corrections to the December 1, 2004 minutes:

Page 3, second paragraph, second sentence should read “He opined it appears more established businesses receive more favorable outcomes to their parking requests”.

Page 4, second paragraph, first sentence should read “John Howe thinks letting this move go through would lead business owners, such as himself, to request similar action in front of their businesses”.

The name “Ron Marek” was misspelled on Page 5.

Page 4, three speakers are unidentified. Lita Verts offered to listen to the audio tape of the minutes at a later date to attempt to identify the speakers.

**Commissioners Joan Wessell and Andy Ross, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission approve, as amended, the December 1, 2004 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **II. Commission Reports**

- **Chair Reports/Updates**

There was nothing to report.

- **BPAC- Andy Ross**

There was nothing to report.

- **CACOT- Lita Verts**

Ridership for Corvallis Transit System (CTS) for July through December, 2004 was 5,998 rides more than July through December, 2003. Ridership for Philomath Connection was 234 rides more than the previous year for a similar time frame. On-time service for 2004 was 93%. The routes are being adjusted in an attempt to raise the percentage of on-time service.

- **City Council- Rob Gándara**

City Council is considering the use of right-of-way for the Renaissance on Riverfront project. A request from the developer has been forwarded to Council for consideration to lease a proposed underground area for off- street parking to be created by the project below Washington Street. Council will discuss at its next meeting the lease rate for underground right-of-way use. The City of Portland uses a 25% rate which, in this case, would amount to approximately \$5,000 per year. Given the expense of underground parking, there has been discussion by Council to forgive all but \$1 of expenses per year for the first ten years of the lease incurred by developers utilizing underground parking. After the ten-year grace period, full payment would be expected for the life of the lease. This issue will be discussed at the next Council meeting.

Lita Verts said underground parking is limited to one level below ground due to the water table. Gándara said this was the reason the Renaissance for Riverfront project needed to lease additional land in lieu of going underground two levels.

### **III. Old Business**

- **New Morning Bakery 30-Minute Parking Space Request- Input from the two new businesses**

Joe Whinnery reported management of Francesco's was contacted about this matter and they are neutral on this subject.

American Dream Pizza had no objection to the 30-minute space proposed to be added on the east side, but no more than one space. They also felt it appropriate to retain a 30-minute space on the west side. This space is important for use by their pickup customers.

Responding to statements the Commission was being inconsistent with criteria used to determine parking spaces, John Howe said the Commission has a history of allowing each business to dictate one parking space in front of its business. He cited Alpine Bakery as an example.

Jim Mitchell said there was discussion at an earlier Commission meeting which highlighted the fact that parking in the block on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Jefferson and Madison Avenues was nearly 90% for longer-term, unrestricted parking spaces. Short-term, 30-minutes space parking was 50% or less. Adding a 30-minute space actually reduces parking capacity. New Morning Bakery has a loading zone behind its building in the alley but they report it does not work appropriately for them. Thus, the request for the 30-minute space.

John Howe asked how often enforcement personnel would be in this area. Jim Mitchell said he has been told enforcement is done on a thirty-minute cycle. Howe said New Morning Bakery would be responsible for reporting parking violations. He said there needs to be an enforcement plan which does not include shop owners having to report violations. Mitchell pointed to the distributed letter from The Clothes Tree which recounts the story of

an employee parked in a 30-minute space and being cited for a violation.

Joan Wessell said any long-term parking converted to short-term parking will be detrimental to downtown businesses. There will be fewer spaces for customers to park where they will feel comfortable lingering at businesses for fear of receiving a ticket.

Rob Gándara stated he would like the Commission to adopt a policy rather than arbitrarily allow a parking space for one business and not another. He says it may appear the Commission is showing favoritism or bias in awarding of spaces.

John Howe said it was his opinion that some of the day-long spaces were not being used by shoppers but rather by others such as employees of businesses. He asked about any data collected to reflect the turnover ratio of parking.

Jim Mitchell responded that Lee Shoemaker collected turn-over data in the New Morning Bakery block. The average was approximately two hours. Some were as long as four hours. A few were more than five hours. These were suspected to be violators of the employee/resident parking regulations. Overall, parking seemed to be used as it was intended.

Rob Gándara said the Commission needs a strategy which includes some 30-minute spaces and some longer-term spaces. He said a policy which limits 30-minute spaces primarily to corners in lieu of locating the spaces in front of businesses would not necessarily benefit businesses. Lita Verts stated there is nothing to prevent downtown businesses from asking for 30-minute spaces directly in front of their businesses.

John Howe said there is a perception in the community that there is very little available downtown parking. He said the Commission needs to address this perception. Joan Wessell said she has found that people want to park directly in front of the business before going in. She points out to them they rarely would be able to park in front of a business at a shopping center.

**Richard Mehlhaf made a motion to put in a 30-minute parking space on the east side of the block which houses New Morning Bakery, on the north end beside the loading zone. John Howe seconded the motion. The motion passed five votes to one with Commissioner Wessell opposing.**

Joe Whinnery will report to the Commission an inventory of short-term, unrestricted parking spaces. The report will detail the number of spaces and their location.

- **6-Hour Parking Limit**

Rob Gándara said data shows most customers are done conducting their business within 4-5

hours. He said enforcement of this limit would be simpler because it is a straight time matter. Also, this limit could open up as many as half the available 24 parking spots downtown that were mentioned in Ms. Rigor's visitor comments. This limit would not change the restriction on downtown employees being able to park in these spaces. These employees would still be required to register their vehicles.

Joan Wessell said she receives numerous calls from businesses concerned about Farmers Market customers tying up parking spaces while not using downtown businesses.

Lita Verts asked about having a public forum to address this issue. Rob Gandara said there have been numerous forums. Further, a consultant was hired to construct benchmarks of Corvallis versus other communities in parking capacity and to make recommendations. When the recommendations were put forth, they were met with much resistance.

Gándara said the consultant and the Police Department were in agreement that the 6-hour limit would be easier to enforce than current limits. Parking Enforcement personnel work 8-hour shifts, therefore enforcement for a 6-hour time limit would be possible within their shifts.

Gándara asked for a staff report to include historical statistics on amount of time vehicles are parked and a statement from the Police Department saying the 6-hour limit would or would not be a benefit to Parking Enforcement. Joe Whinnery answered he would attempt to accumulate the statistics and forward them to Commission members in time for them to read the report before the February meeting.

Joan Wessell said she would email DCA members to ask their opinions on 6-hour parking and will bring the responses to the February meeting.

#### **IV. New Business**

- **Letter from Mardi Bilsland- \$10 Violation at 30-Minute Spaces**

The current penalty for violations of 30-minute parking spaces involving employees of downtown businesses is \$10, the same penalty for all other violators. The law states more than one ticket can be given for a recurring violation during one day.

John Howe said a \$100 fine for a violation at 30-minutes spaces is excessive. He said a recurring citation would be effective.

**Commissioners John Howe and Joan Wessell, respectively, made a motion that the Commission forward to the Police Department a recommendation that there be a recurring ticket for violations at 30-minute spaces. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **V. Visitor Comments**

Ann Rigor, a downtown business owner, said on Wednesday, January 26, 2005, she was on Monroe Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets. Out of 24 spaces designated for non-employees and non-residents, she counted 10 spaces occupied by employees and residents. She expressed her frustration with Parking Enforcement while recounting she has previously emailed vehicle license plate numbers and vehicle descriptions with no resulting action from Parking Enforcement. After telephoning Parking Enforcement on the matter, Rigor was told a warning would be placed on the offending vehicles. Rigor said if Parking Enforcement can identify an employee who is illegally parked, a ticket should be issued in person.

John Howe said, as a business owner, he would be very opposed to Parking Enforcement confronting an employee of his during business hours in front of customers. Richard Mehlhaf disagreed, saying he thought an employee receiving a parking ticket would send a positive sign to customers that parking enforcement is being done vigilantly.

Joan Wessell said the Police Department has forms to be affixed to illegally parked vehicles. Some paperwork needs to be filled out before forms will be distributed. The forms serve as warnings and Wessell says she has seen positive results with the use of these forms.

Rob Gándara said the cost for hiring additional Parking Enforcement personnel would not match additional income brought in by such personnel. Parking Enforcement has conveyed to the Parking Commission its desire to have a straight number of hours as a limit on free customer parking spaces. This would eliminate the need for Parking Enforcement to determine if a vehicle is in fact owned by a downtown resident or employee.

Lita Verts suggested a report of Ann Rigor's testimony be sent to the Police Department.

## **VI. Other Business/Actions/Information Sharing**

- **10-Hour Meter Permit Parking- Map and Update**

Joe Whinnery reported permits went on sale January 26, 2005. Advertisements were posted in the Gazette Times. Permits are color coded a different color each month. They are transferable, i.e. they are not assigned to a particular vehicle or person.

Permits can be purchased for periods of one month, three months or one year. Permits do not guarantee a parking space will be available but the hope is that it will make the process of parking in a 10-hour space less cumbersome. At the time the program was put into effect, there was a waiting list of 27 people. There are 418 10-hour spaces available in this program, covering pay station spaces and meters themselves. The meters are marked in

yellow to help identify them. The cost is \$20 per month, \$55 for three months, \$216 for one year.

- **Request for change on 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Jackson Avenue**

Joe Whinnery reported there was a request for a change on 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Jackson Avenue by Water Street Market. Three parking spaces on Jackson Avenue would be eliminated to create a new entrance. The Market has petitioned Community Development for a permit to allow closure of two driveways and entrance into the parking lots from 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Parking spaces would be created out of the driveways in exchange for elimination of three parking spaces on Jackson Avenue which would be used for entrance into the parking lot. The City would gain one parking space with this exchange. Three spaces will be lost on Jackson Avenue, but four spaces will be gained on 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

Two area businesses, including Big River Restaurant, have agreed to this request when approached. Development Services, considering the permit for this request, asked that the Commission be informed of the request and report any concerns. None were recorded.

- **Pay Station Malfunction**

Joan Wessell reported on a person parked at a pay station early one morning before work. The person attempted to put money in the pay station but the station would not accept the money. The person then left to go to work and noticed a ticket on his vehicle upon returning. Wessell spoke with a Parking Enforcement employee as well as a Public Works staff member. Someone will be checking into the pay stations, apparently some stations will not accept money before a certain time in the morning.

- **Parking Requests prior to Downtown Parking Commission**

Jon Katin was not in attendance to provide information on this topic. The topic will be addressed at a future meeting.

## **VII. Adjournment**

**Joan Wessell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Andy Ross. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **FUTURE MEETINGS:**

Wednesday, February 23, 2005, City Hall Meeting Room "D", 5:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, March 23, 2005, City Hall Meeting Room "D", 5:00 p.m.